

Attorney Docket: 01286
U.S. Application No. 10/026,704 Art Unit 2661
Response to July 13, 2007 Final Office Action

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

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19. (Currently Amended) A set top box integrated with, or communicating with, a television, the set top box comprising:

a first input receiving broadcasted content from a service provider on audio signal;
a first output adapted to be received by the television, the first output sending the broadcasted content to the television;

a second input to receive message information from a user;
a second output connected to an input of adapted to be received by a second set top box using a back channel communications path, the back channel communications

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path using an in-home wiring system that is different from the first input, the second output sending the message information to the second set top box, thus establishing a two-way intercom system with the second set top box; and
~~a second input adapted to receive audible message information; and~~
a back channel communications path that is different from the first input,

wherein the broadcasted content audio signal is processed for an audio channel and, when the audible message information has audible content, the message information is processed for another audio channel and a volume of the broadcasted content audio signal is reduced below a volume of the ~~received audible~~ message information being played.

20. (Currently Amended) The set top box according to claim 19, wherein the message information comprises at least one of video information, text information, and a pre-formatted message and formatting information, the formatting information being preset and fixed such that the user is unable to change the formatting information, the formatting information causing a reduction in a size of a displayed image to create a blank margin below the displayed image and another blank margin beside the displayed image, the formatting information causing the message information to be displayed in the blank margin below the displayed image and in the another blank margin beside the displayed image.
21. (Previously Presented) A set top box according to claim 30, wherein the audible message information comprises at least one of video information, text information, and a pre-formatted message.
22. (Previously Presented) A set top box according to claim 30, wherein the audio content is processed for a left audio channel and the audible message information is processed for a right audio channel.

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23. (Previously Presented) A set top box according to claim 30, wherein the memory stores pre-made voice messages.
24. (Currently Amended) The set top box according to claim 19, wherein for urgent messages the formatting information replaces the displayed image with a blank background and displays the message information the message information is retrieved from a memory device.
25. (Previously Presented) The set top box according to claim 19, further comprising memory storing pre-made voice messages.
26. (Previously Presented) The set top box according to claim 19, further comprising a message waiting indicator.
27. (Previously Presented) The set top box according to claim 19, further comprising another input adapted to receive information from a keyboard.
28. (Previously Presented) The set top box according to claim 19, wherein the first input also receives a video signal and the set top box modifies the video signal to display a text message.
29. (Previously Presented) The set top box according to claim 19, wherein the audio signal is processed for a left audio channel and the audible message information is processed for a right audio channel.
30. (Currently Amended) A set top box integrated with, or communicating with, a television, the set top box comprising memory storing instructions for:

receiving broadcasted audio content from a service provider via a first input;

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sending the broadcasted content to the television via providing a first output to the television;

receiving message information from a user via a second input; and

communicating via a back channel communications path that is connected between a second output of the set top box and an input of a second set top box, the back channel communications path using an in-home wiring system that is different from the first input, the second output sending the message information to the second set top box, thus establishing a two-way intercom system with the second set top box, [[:]]

providing a second output adapted to be received by a second set top box; and receiving audible message information via a second input,

wherein the broadcasted content is processed for an audio channel and, when the message information has audible content, the message information is processed for another audio channel and a volume of the broadcasted content is reduced below a volume of the message information being played

~~wherein the audio content is processed for an audio channel and the audible message information is processed for another audio channel and a volume of the audio content is reduced below a volume of the audible message information being played.~~

31. (Previously Presented) A set top box according to claim 30, wherein the memory stores instructions for receiving signals from a keyboard input.